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—A Poem by Claire McAllister

THE

Commonweal

"Brother Against Brother"

THE AMERICAN WAR

by Walker Percy

Eleven Years Later

PILGRIMAGE TO DACHAU

by Morris Philipson

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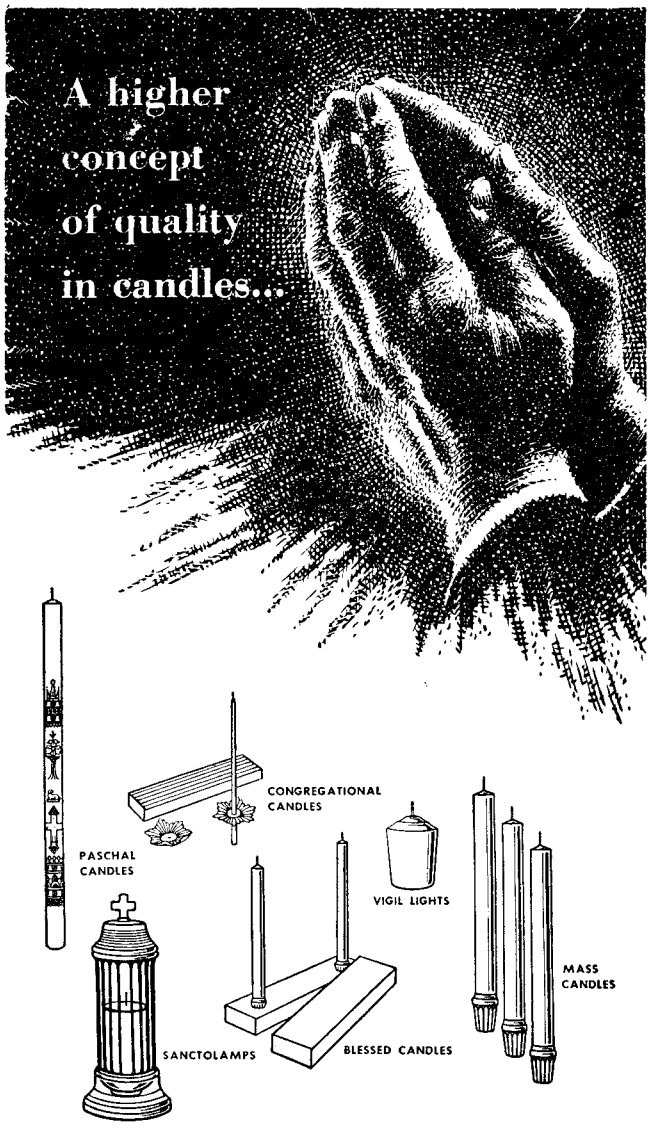

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THE COMMONWEAL
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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-THIRD YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

AND NOW, SCHOOL BUSES

RECENT MONTHS have been full of controversy of a socio-politico-religious nature. There was the fight over "Baby Doll," which happily seems to be fading away. There was the dispute over the TV showing of "Martin Luther," which threatens to continue for some time in the future. On a somewhat smaller scale, there was the argument over the operations of the Catholic National Organization for Decent Literature. If present indications are any guide, the next item on the agenda of troubled Catholic-Protestant relations may be the school bus question, and the chances are that this one will still be going on after "Baby Doll" and the exchanges over "Martin Luther" are ancient history.

At the moment, disputes on the bus question are under way in two Eastern states. In Connecticut twenty-nine out of the state's one hundred and sixty-nine towns already provide transportation for children attending private and parochial schools as well as the public ones, but the state legislature has so far avoided expressing any policy on the matter. Now a bill has been introduced that would specifically provide authority for towns to supply such transportation, and the resulting debate will undoubtedly be heated.

In Maine, the same issue took a more dramatic turn. In a recent advisory referendum, citizens of the town of Augusta voted in favor of providing public transportation for parochial school children. Despite the result of the balloting, the town council subsequently rejected the proposal. Catholic parents then threatened to enroll all of the town's nine hundred parochial school children in the public schools unless transportation was provided for those children who live on the outskirts of the city. Two-thirds of the children in the Catholic school had been enrolled in the public school, with more to come, when the town government relented. The token sum of one hundred dollars was then appropriated for bus transportation to the parochial school, in order to secure a court test of the legality of the matter, and at this writing the Catholic children have gone back to the parochial school. There the matter will stand until the court makes its decision.

The issues involved in such disputes are important to all Americans, not just to the citizens of Maine and Connecticut. In the months and years ahead, controversies involving the parochial schools will almost certainly arise in communities all over the nation. If bitter divisions are not to be created, it is important that spokesmen on both sides use restraint and common sense. At the outset, all concerned should face the fact that in such disputes there are always a certain number of people more ready to respond to a call to battle than to pleas for reason. Most Catholics, we think, are willing to admit that they have their own share of these. But on questions like lunch programs and bus transportation—indeed on the whole question of parochial schools—it also seems safe to say that most Catholics feel they have not received a fair hearing from their non-Catholic neighbors.

TAKE THE Maine case, for example. At first glance, the threat to enroll all the Catholic children in the public schools unless the demand for bus transportation was met would seem like a drastic step. Transferring the children in this fashion would dramatize the tax-saving the parochial school represents for the community, as the Catholic parents intended, but to many people the tactic looked downright antagonistic, as the naked use of economic pressure usually does. But the Catholic par-

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ents there say they have been trying for years to have this issue dealt with, without success, and that the threat of wholesale transfer which promptly brought some action was simply their last resort.

This is a common complaint among Catholic parents. When it comes to parochial schools, they feel that nobody listens to their side of the case. In this belief they have, we think, considerable justification, and we would therefore urge non-Catholics to take a fresh look at their position on questions involving parochial schools. And we would particularly urge this reexamination on those who are religiously oriented in their thinking.

Catholics are not opposed to the public schools. They recognize that some citizens do not want their children to receive a religious education. They realize that many other Americans want their children to receive moral and religious teaching, but are convinced that this can be done in the home and at Sunday school. Catholics, however, feel that more formal education in morality and religion is required than can normally be provided in the home or in an hour or two on Sunday. Where it is possible for them to do so, therefore, they build and support parochial schools which at once maintain high academic standards and provide that fuller religious framework without which Catholics feel education is incomplete.

As a result of these conscientious convictions, Catholics have spent hundreds of millions of dollars to build Catholic schools in many parts of this country. In such instances, not only are the Catholic children not attending the public schools, but the Catholic parents, of course, continue to pay the school tax which supports the public school system. Thus the existence of the Catholic school system represents a substantial saving for non-Catholic taxpayers in these areas.

When the total cost of operating the parochial schools is taken into account, the amount required for such items as the operation of buses is probably not terribly large—although in some communities this additional item of expense seems like the proverbial last straw, threatening to break the camel's back. But in most cases psychological factors are probably at least as important as the economic.

Catholics feel they are treated like second-class citizens when issues like the parochial schools come up. They think the Catholic schools in the United States are not only quite in keeping with the best traditions and aims of this country, but that they represent a substantial and expensive contribution to the national welfare. Most Catholics think of local or federal services like medical check-ups or subsidized lunches or bus rides as "auxiliary services," aimed at helping the child, not the school. If a Catholic child cannot get a governmentally financed lunch because he is in a parochial school rather than a public one, or if a Catholic child cannot ride on a school bus because he will get off in front of the Catholic school rather than the public one, Catholic parents feel they are being taken advantage of on a technicality, despite the substantial contributions of the parochial school system to the community at large, even if these are considered purely in economic terms.

Discussion of questions involving the parochial schools are almost always in terms of church-state. Often, however, Catholic parents feel that much of the opposition to their point of view on issues like school buses has little or nothing to do with the church-state question; they are convinced that many people simply use this argument to keep taxes down, with the belief that Catholics will keep the parochial schools going, no matter what.

Some people, of course, do feel a real problem over church-state relationships is involved in the school bus issue. Catholics, however, think that on this score the issue is not at all as simple as it has been made out to be. On questions which involve parochial schools, they feel, many Protestants have been unduly influenced by the arguments of doctrinaire secularists, who are determined to root out all traces of religion from national life, or are motivated, perhaps unconsciously, by their traditionally anti-Roman Catholic convictions—in other words, by personal religious beliefs rather than political arguments.

Here the example of the G.I. bill is pertinent. Few if any Americans considered the program of education carried out under this legislation as a violation of the American principles governing church and state, even though private institutions, both religious and non-religious, participated in and benefited from the program. Chance and historical circumstance have determined that most of the parochial schools in this country are Catholic, with only a scattering of comparable Protestant schools. In the light of the G.I. bill, it does not seem far-fetched for Catholics to think that the present debate would not be going on at all if the members of other faiths conducted their own schools in any substantial numbers. They think their fellow-citizens are denying Catholic children services they would never question if the shoe were on the other foot. It is no wonder, then, that feelings on the issue sometimes run high.

The editors of this magazine have always op-

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posed the efforts of any religious body in the United States to use the state improperly in an effort to attain its own ends. On these questions which involve the parochial schools, we think serious non-Catholics should consider whether an analogous abuse is not involved, whether their power is not being used to force the state to deny Catholics what is rightly their due. The negative use of power against another religious group may be less obvious than a positive effort to use the state for private purposes, but surely one is no more justifiable then the other.

DEFENDING EUROPE

THE North Atlantic Treaty Organization has been thrust off the front pages in recent weeks. There is too much excitement elsewhere. Countless shifts in promise, threat and performance in the Middle East have taken most of the play from Europe. The threatened disintegration of the populous Republic of Indonesia has recalled to American readers the strategic importance of the Far East—as has the tragic death of President Magsaysay of the Philippines, the staunchest upholder of democracy, political integrity, national sovereignty and friendship with the West in all of Asia. Yet the fact remains that Western Europe with its traditions, its wealth, its skill and its advanced stage of culture and technical proficiency, remains for the United States the most important overseas area outside the Iron Curtain. In the defense of the peoples of the free world Western Europe still has the priority.

On the agenda at Bermuda disposition of the NATO forces and the defense of Europe constitutes one of the main topics set for discussion between President Eisenhower and Prime Minister Macmillan. The British request to reduce their commitments by withdrawing 27,000 men from West Germany is disquieting to the French and other NATO nations. Commander Norstadt believes that the present force of thirty divisions constitutes the very minimum compatible with security. Hence the intended partial British withdrawal would lead to serious weakening of this several-nations defense force. The French, for their part, have been counting on the full British contingent to counterbalance the presence of some twelve German divisions in NATO some months hence. Other European nations are fearful lest the cutting down of its NATO contingents by Great Britain lead to a comparable reduction on the part of the United States—which presumably would mean abandoning all claim to an adequate defense set-up for present frontiers, if it would not impair the original conception of falling back to a position along the Rhine which could be defended.

In view of what is at stake under present military conditions, it would seem to be the part of wisdom for Britain's NATO partners to consider offering special inducements. Whether they would take the form of sharing some of the expenses, certain new financial or trade arrangements or loans or grants, would be of secondary importance. This is a crucial period for NATO and Europe. It is hardly the moment for keeping eyes fixed, far beyond these ramparts, on the disturbances in more distant and difficult climes.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM WEEK

THE PUBLIC COLLEGES in New York were the scene recently of a small but widely reverberating furore over the banning of Communist editor John Gates from the city college campuses. Students have branded this action "oppressive" and "immoral," and many others, including Norman Thomas, the American Civil Liberties Union and the New York *Post*, have made public protest. We think a little quiet reconsideration is in order.

Mr. Gates, important Communist Party functionary, editor of the *Daily Worker*, convicted under the Smith Act of "conspiring to advocate overthrow of the United States government by force," was invited by a Queens College student group to address a forum celebrating Academic Freedom Week. His subject was to have been "Intellectual Freedom and the Communist Party Convention." The uproar was touched off when Queens College Provost Thomas V. Garvey cancelled the invitation. A student group at CCNY, another city college, quickly extended Mr. Gates an invitation to speak at their school, but this was quashed by an announcement from all five city college presidents denying "campus courtesies" to persons convicted under the Smith Act. Now a student organization at Columbia University in New York has invited Mr. Gates to appear as their guest. And all the while charges and countercharges fly fast.

Was it proper for Mr. Gates to have been invited to the schools in the first place? He would obviously

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not have spoken to the students as a disinterested seeker after truth. In accordance with the latest Party line, which seems, largely, a return to the "popular front" technique of the thirties, Mr. Gates was undoubtedly eager to participate "democratically" in a liberal American forum. He is a Communist Party official and a convicted conspirator. It is easy to understand the reluctance of school administrators to welcome him in their schools. And we doubt if much good could have come of his addressing the students at Queens College or CCNY.

On the other hand, not much harm could have come of Mr. Gates' addressing these students, and considerable damage has resulted from his being banned from the local campuses. The resultant outcry has given Mr. Gates the opportunity to assume the favorite Communist posture of martyrdom, and to identify himself as a champion of free speech and the democratic process. This confusion is particularly unfortunate on the occasion of Academic Freedom Week, and it seems reasonable to conclude that it gives more aid and comfort to the Communist cause than would permitting John Gates to address a student forum.

THE HOPE OF PEACE

RECENT EVENTS have made the limitations of the UN all too clear. The unsatisfactory nature of UN action—or the absence of UN action—in the Kashmir-India dispute, the Hungarian revolution, the Suez crisis and consequent Arab-Israeli conflicts has seriously weakened the position of the UN in world opinion. In this country particularly, the UN is under heavy fire from all sides. Isolationists continue their condemnation in principle; internationalists have become increasingly dissatisfied with the functioning of the UN and the discrepancies between its theory and its practice.

In light of this, and as an antidote to this feeling of discouragement, we would like to call attention to an address recently given by Archbishop Robert E. Lucey of San Antonio. Archbishop Lucey spoke at a meeting of the Catholic Council of Working Life in Chicago, on the subject of "The United Nations and World Peace." The Archbishop's talk was characterized by the very qualities we must all attain if the world is to know peace: good will, of course, but also knowledge, patience, and steadfastness in the face of failure. He did not simply repeat slogans, as we are all prone to do; he came to grips with particular, terribly difficult problems, as we are all reluctant to do.

Some of the observations he made: We must adhere to principle in international relations even when it hurts. If our position on anti-colonial disputes should offend some of our allies, "that's just too bad." "Red China should not be allowed to fight its way into the UN," but it would be "madness" for us to withdraw from the UN if Red China is admitted. "Those who claim that we ought to get out of the UN should tell us frankly how we can survive alone in a tragic and troubled world."

Archbishop Lucey spelled out all the difficulties and dangers which beset us and the UN, but warned nevertheless that we have no alternative. Grossly imperfect it may be, but the UN is "our one last hope of peace."

NEXT WEEK

HAROLD C. HINTON discusses relations between the Russian and Chinese Communist Parties.

"Peking has stepped forward in the role of the conciliator of differences, the most prominent formulator of the 'line' for world Communism, the champion of 'proletarian internationalism' as opposed to pure Stalinism (Soviet domination of other Communist Parties) on the one hand and Titoism or 'national Communism' on the other."

FATHER JAMES M. GILLIS

IN THE DEATH of Father Gillis at the age of eighty on March 14, the Catholic press in this country has lost one of its most colorful and prominent figures. For over a quarter-century he edited the *Catholic World*, while for a similar span his warmly argued *Sursum Corda* column appeared regularly in fifty diocesan papers. Father Gillis was perhaps best known at first as an apologist, but in the development of his long and vigorous journalistic career he became more and more widely quoted for his outspoken positions on controversial political issues. Over the years he demonstrated his real gift for controversy, a fact which those who disagreed with him, as we often did, recognized full well. In defending what he believed in, he let the chips fall where they would. The contribution he made to American Catholic journalism in the course of a half-century as a zealous Paulist priest will be a lasting one. May he rest in peace.

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The American War

"THE WHOLE COUNTRY, SOUTH INCLUDED, IS JUST BEGINNING TO SEE THE CIVIL WAR WHOLE AND ENTIRE FOR THE FIRST TIME"

WALKER PERCY

WHAT ARE THE reasons for the current revival of interest in the Civil War? That there is such a revival is undeniable. Books on the War pour off the presses every week—some of them, incidentally, of a very high order, such as Bruce Catton's *This Hallowed Ground* and Shelby Foote's *Shiloh!* What is at once noticeable about the current literature is its frankly non-political character and the absence of the old rancor. The race issue may be still very much an issue, but Northern and Southern historians have achieved a common view of the War itself. When Catton from Michigan and Foote from Mississippi write about the battle of Shiloh, it sounds like the same battle. Catton is never more eloquent than when he is appraising Lee's generalship; Foote is just as impressed by the fighting qualities of the Northern soldier. Indeed, from this distance the underdog psychology probably kindles the reader's enthusiasm more readily than do the social issues—and perhaps this is just as well.

The general impression outside the South seems to be that it is the rest of the country which has rediscovered the Civil War, that the South has never stopped looking back. This is mistaken, I believe, and is due to an understandable optical illusion. The truth is, at least in my experience, that the Southerner never thinks about the Civil War—until he finds himself among Northerners. Then, for some reason—perhaps because the Northerner insists on casting him in his historical role and the Southerner is perfectly willing to oblige, or because, lost in the great cities of the North, he feels for the first time the need of his heritage—he breaks out the Stars and Bars. I remember traveling from Alabama to summer camp in Wisconsin in the twenties. The train would stop in Chicago to pick up more boys. We from Alabama had heard as little about the Civil War as the Boer War and cared less, but every time the Illinois boys got on in Chicago the War started, a real brawl yet not really bad-tempered. The same sort of thing must have happened during the World War I when an Alabama division suddenly found itself in a donnybrook with the Fighting 69th at Plattsburg.

The truth of it is, I think, that the whole country, South included, is just beginning to see the Civil War whole and entire for the first time. The thing was too big and too bloody, too full of suffering and hatred, too closely knit into the fabric of our meaning as a people, to be held off and looked at—until now. It is like a man walking away from a mountain. The bigger it is, the farther he's got to go before he can see it. Then one day he looks back and there it is, this colossal thing lying across his past.

A history of the shifting attitudes toward the War would be enlightening. There would probably emerge a pattern common to such great events, a dialectic of loss-recovery: the long period of recollection, of intense partisan interest which is followed by a gradual fading of the Event into a dusty tapestry. (Lee and Grant at Appomattox taking their place beside Washington Crossing the Delaware.) Then under certain circumstances, there is the recovery. Perhaps Washington will never be recovered, having been ossified too long in grammar school tableaus. But Lincoln and Grant and McClellan and even the legendary Lee, who after all are closer in time to Washington than to us, have come very much alive. Why, then, their recovery, and what exactly has been recovered?

WHAT HAS been recovered, it seems clear, is not the politics or the sociology of the War, nor even the slavery issue, but the fight itself. The tableau I remember from school was the Reconciliation, Grant and Lee in the McLean house, Lee healing the wounds at Washington College. Little was said about the War, except that it was tragic, brother fighting against brother, etc. Undoubtedly this was the necessary if somewhat boring emphasis for the textbooks. Now, after ninety years of Reconciliation, we can take a look at the fight itself.

What a fight it was! The South is a very big place, yet there is hardly a district that didn't have its skirmish, its Federal gunboat sunk in a bayou—where

Dr. Percy, who practices medicine in Louisiana, contributes to *America*, the *Partisan Review* and other journals, as well as to this magazine.

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some old-timer won't tell you, "Yes, they came through here." It is startling to realize that there were more casualties in the Civil War than in all the American forces of World War II, and more than in all other American wars put together. Of 3,000,000 men under arms, 2,300,000 for the Union, 750,000 for the Confederacy, 618,222 died, with total casualties probably going well past a million. For sheer concentrated fury, there are few events even in modern warfare to equal that terrible September 17 at Antietam Creek when over 20,000 men fell—or the May-June of '64 when, beginning with the battle of the Wilderness, Grant lost on the average of 2000 men a day for 30 days, culminating in the slaughter at Cold Harbor when over 8000 men fell in about ten minutes! There were murderous battles in the West which one never heard of, like Stone's River with over 25,000 casualties.

Yet terrible as it was, it is impossible to read of the Army of Northern Virginia or of the Army of the Potomac without being caught up in the tremendous drama. The armies were big enough so that the action took place on an epic scale, yet the War was, as much as were the Punic Wars, a personal encounter of the opposing leaders. Lee was very much aware of this grim beauty when the fog rose over Fredericksburg showing Burnside's entire army facing his, battleflags flying. "It is well that war is so terrible," he said; "else we should grow too fond of it." But what gave the Civil War the tragic proportions of the *Iliad* was the fact, apparent after Shiloh, that the American soldier, Union and Confederate, was not going to be beaten until he could literally fight no longer or was killed. When his leader was great, he was almost invincible; when his leader was mediocre, he was still superb. Pickett's charge is justly famous, but just as heartbreaking was the Union assault on Longstreet's position in the sunken road at Fredericksburg. The difference was that where Pickett's men had every confidence in Lee, Couch's men knew very well that Burnside was wrong. Yet they attacked all day long, and only stopped when the field was piled so high with dead that they could no longer run over them.

AS IN ALL tragedies, a great deal seemed to depend upon fate. Small mischances become as important as Thetis's oversight when she dipped Achilles—all but his heel—into the Styx. A Confederate courier loses some battle orders; they are found wrapped around three cigars and brought to McClellan; the direct result is the battle of Antietam. One can't read of that war without playing the fascinating game of what-if. . . . What if Jackson had lived through Chancellorsville? What if McClellan had listened to Phil Kearny (instead of the Pinkerton detectives) during the Seven Days? What if Jeb Stuart had tended to business at Gettysburg? Lee was always just missing; his Cannae and Lincoln's generals were always just short of ordinary competence—until he got Grant.

Besides the great failures, there were the great successes, the heroes' deeds which are always irresistible to the human spirit and so pass over immediately into the legend of the race. There was Chancellorsville when Lee, facing Hooker's 85,000, divided his battered army of 43,000, sent Jackson to the left, leaving him in front of Hooker with 17,000 men—and attacked and very nearly destroyed the Army of the Potomac. There was the Union's "Pap" Thomas's assault on Missionary Ridge at Chattanooga and the subsequent demoralization of Bragg. And there was the fateful decision at Spotsylvania when, after taking a fearful mauling, Grant, instead of falling back toward Washington as the army had been doing for the past three years, retreated—*south,* sliding around Lee's right.

Therein lies the tragedy. If Lee had been a little more or a little less—if he had gotten his Cannae or if he had only been just competent and been whipped by McClellan in '62—the results would still have been notable, but they would not have approached the terror and piteousness of what actually did happen. The summer of 1864 has a *Gotterdammerung* quality. With the issue hardly in doubt after Gettysburg, the fighting nevertheless increased in fury with both sides attacking steadily, without the usual remissions between battles.

YET WITH all the horror, or perhaps because of it, there was always the feeling then, and even now as we read about it, that the things a man lived through were somehow twice as real, twice as memorable as the peace that followed. Peace is better than war, yet it is a sad fact that some of the heroes of the War, like Grant and Longstreet and many a lesser man, found the peace a long descent into mediocrity. In the ordeal the man himself seemed to become more truly himself, revealing his character or the lack of it, than at any time before or after. If a man was secretly cowardly or secretly brave, stupid or shrewd, that was what he was shown to be. The War infallibly discovered his hidden weakness and his hidden strength. Hooker the braggart was reduced to impotence simply by having Lee's small army in front of him (and understandably, for the veterans of the Army of the Potomac used to say to replacements fresh from victories in the West: "Wait till you meet Bobby Lee"). Grant the ne'er-do-well matured in defeat and became a noble and sensitive human being by having Lee at his mercy. It is no wonder that there was the temptation, especially in the ruined South, to enshrine those four years as the four years of truth and to discount all other times, even the future.

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Then there were the thousand and one lesser encounters, any one of which, if it had happened at another time, would have its own literature and its own historians: the Confederate raiders, Farragut's capture of New Orleans, the battle of the ironclads, Forrest's miniature Cannae at Bryce Crossroads, James Andrews' stealing the Confederate train, and so on. It was the last of the wars of individuals, when a single man's ingenuity and pluck not only counted for something in itself but could conceivably affect the entire issue. Forrest himself is quite unbelievable. It is as if Launcelot had been reborn in Memphis. He carried into battle a cavalry saber sharpened to a razor edge and actually killed men with it. He actually did fool a Yankee commander into surrendering by parading a single cannon back and forth in the distance as they parleyed. He actually did have twenty-nine horses shot from under him.

THERE IS an ambiguity about this new interest in the Civil War. On the one hand it is the past recaptured, the authentic recovery of the long agony during which this nation came to be what it is. Yet there is also the temptation to yield to an historical illusion by which the past seems to gain in stature and authenticity as it recedes and the present to be discounted because it is the here and now. We sense the illusion in the words of the old-timer, "Yes, they came through here," in which it is somehow implied that this place has existed in a long trivial aftermath after its one day of glory. Perhaps the North is in for a mild case of the same romanticism which the South recovered from over fifty years ago.

The increased emphasis upon the fighting at the expense of ideology is probably good. One does well, anyway, not to apply ideology too closely to that war. James Truslow Adams can talk about the March of Democracy and Bruce Catton can call the Union army a truly revolutionary army and perhaps they are right. Perhaps the War was really and truly fought over slavery. But the other case can be made too. It is difficult to see the yeoman farmers who largely made up the Army of the Tennessee and the Army of Northern Virginia as Southern Bourbons. The South had some reason to regard the fight as a continuation of the American Revolution. After all it was her soil which was being invaded and her independence which was being denied. The South might even have the better of the constitutional argument; yet what won out seems to transcend all the arguments. For it is that extraordinary thing, the American Union.

ELEVEN YEARS LATER

Pilgrimage to Dachau

MORRIS PHILIPSON

THE WEATHER suddenly turned mild in Munich at the beginning of February. Birds were chirping in the bare trees. The snow had disappeared, and the pale green lawns smelled moist and sweet. In the parks the Germans sat on benches with their faces lifted like sun-worshippers. At lunch someone suggested taking a drive fifteen miles north of Munich to Dachau. We all agreed to go. All four of us are Jewish; each of us is old enough to remember.

The town of Dachau stands on a bluff rising from the Bavarian plain. From a distance you see the metal onion on the steeple of a white baroque church and the seventeenth century summer palace of the Wittlesbach family. The town spills down across the flat land, before the bluff, into new, dull, low apartment houses. Having no idea of where to find the camp, we parked behind the church first, and walked around it. A stone-carved St. Sebastian with metal arrows stands atop a column commemorating the dead of 1914-18. A stone St. George gouges a dragon with a metal spear. The weather-tanned wooden doors of the church are carved in low relief, elegantly, as though a touch of the Italian Renaissance lingered here more leisurely than usual. And inside, where the walls and ceiling are not white, the pink and lime-green is subdued. Even the thickly gilded statues are done with restraint and are not too numerous. But we did not visit there long.

We walked up the short hill to the palace. Where its war damage is repaired, the brick is unplastered. It is a high, long rectangle with long, broad windows, looking for all the world like a small town high school in America. The garden paths before and beyond it were mashed into mud roads: there was a crowd. A

Mr. Philipson, a member of the faculty at Juilliard, is now in Europe on a Fulbright fellowship.

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children's pre-Lent *Fasching* party was going on in the ball-room. Small boys rushed by dressed as cowboys and girls in red dirndles had streaks of lipstick across their cheeks. Fur-coated mothers on the terrace looked at the flat view across the plain toward Munich. During the war, they say, Munichites took a bus here to drink beer at the terrace café. Did the smoke from the crematoriums show in the sky on Sundays? From the ballroom the noise of a polka sounded. Children shouted.

We visited the museum on the ground floor of the palace. There are a few cases of Roman relics found in the neighborhood: metal oil lamps and clay pieces. But on the whole this is a museum of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and later. The art objects and the household goods are without elegance, the flower-painted wardrobes and windowseats heavy and crude, the beds high and small, the copper kitchen utensils ordinary. The general effect is of a Pennsylvania Dutch farm house gone to seed. Over all, the museum is unprepossessing and slipshod. But it may be that in anticipation of the other museum we had come to see, we were prejudiced against this one.

We drove down through the small town to the outskirts, where we learned that the U.S. Army base incorporates what was the Nazi Concentration Camp. It is a large Army camp with modern apartment houses, a gymnasium, recreation buildings like nightclubs hidden among the pine trees. We drove along acres of five-storey Army buildings, a laundry and dry-cleaning plant, a powerhouse, past American children riding bicycles and Negro soldiers in fatigues marching in a squad, past the arrow-signs pointing through sidestreets to the Dependents' school, the library, the Officers' Club, past the golf course, to where an incredibly-coupled road sign marked the direction of the Crematorium and the Skeet Grounds. Around the corner from a parking lot—"orders taken here for cars, down-payments accepted"—we turned into an area beyond a white wall.

THERE IS black gravel on all the paths and young evergreens, brown-fringed now in February, growing in little clusters. It is like walking through a cemetery where there are no gravestones. In the open space between two plain wooden shacks there is a statue to the memory of those who died here. It is in black granite. On a white base stands a small figure in clothes and shoes too large for him. His hands are in his coat pockets. His bald head is emaciated, the cheeks sunken and the eyes deep. But it is a pose of dignity and strength. Unsentimental and less than life-size, the statue stands there like a black ghost.

Beyond it a young tree grows in the center of the square above the holes in a concrete base marking where the execution gallows stood. All the plaques, in black letters on white stone, are in German, French and English.

In the small building on the left of the gallows are two crematorium ovens. Wreaths of flowers and urns with laurel branches stand on the cement floor before them. The brick ovens are open. Behind them on one side is an empty coal bin. On the other side two long deep-rusted ash sifters.

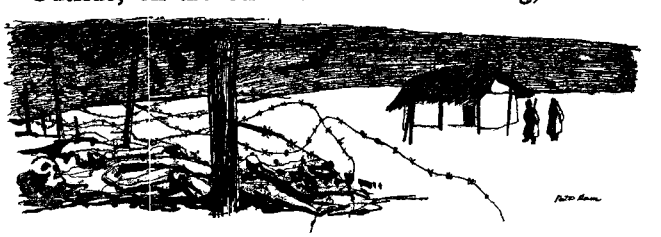
We walked across to the larger building, which has a series of rooms in it. The first three are empty, their plaster walls painted gray-white. In the first, the prisoners were undressed. In the second, they were given a shower. In the third, they were gassed to death. In the fourth, they were cremated. This last room contains three double crematorium brick ovens. The doors are open and from one of them a metal stretcher sticks out.

Here the floor is strewn with fresh flower wreaths, and the faded colored streamers of various countries hang from rusted bars near the low ceiling. The walls are lined with fading laurel wreaths, each circling small flags of a hundred nations. In the fifth room, where the bodies were found stacked one upon the other, there is a memorial plaque of black marble with a legend in French: "1945-55 Anniversary of Liberation. To you who come to this place of suffering think on those who did not survive and remember those who gave their lives for peace and for Belgium." It is the only memorial of its kind there.

A German offered us a souvenir booklet for sale, which we declined. There were a few German "tourists," and some American soldiers in casual Sunday civilian clothes, some with their families. One held an infant in his arms.

On the walls of each of these five rooms there are hundreds upon hundreds of autographs of people who have visited here in the past eleven years. The names and addresses are in English, French, German, Hungarian, Polish, Italian, Hebrew, Greek, Dutch, Scandinavian, and so on. Some are marked with the serial numbers of prisoners who survived. But the only comments written on any of the walls were in the Death Room. The wall of the gas chamber is painted black now halfway up from the floor. Above the black line is scratched into the plaster, in English, "Father, Forgive them." Below it, written in pencil in equally square capitals, is the word "Never."

Outside, on the other side of the building, a black



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gravel path leads to two common graves. On top of a bulging ten-foot square of moist black earth a circle of small flowers grows. On three sides of the plot evergreens have been planted. In the center of the trees at the back, a wooden Star of David stands, and at the foot a plaque with the statement, "Mass Grave of Thousands Unknown." Beyond an ivy-covered mound, marked as the firing range for executions, with a ditch for the stream of blood, is the second tomb of ashes. It is identical with the first but for a wooden cross instead of the Jewish star. Likewise, the plaque reads "Mass Grave of Thousands Unknown."

We walked through one more of the paths leading back to the crematorium. A wooden box stands at the side marked "Ashes were kept here."

IN THE open place between the statue and the gallows spot is a square stone table top standing on a column. A sun is carved in the center, and around it is written "They died for Law and Freedom." Would it not have been more telling if it said "They died because of madness and political irresponsibility"? Or, "They died because bestial inhumanity is sometimes legally possible"?

They say that when the Army liberated Dachau the soldiers forced the German townspeople to march through the camp to see what had been under their noses for ten years. And the people were incredulous. They say that this little corner is all that remains of the death camp because German sensibility could not stand being reminded of too much. The question of how much the Germans, even the rank and file Nazis, knew of what went on in Hitler's concentration camps will remain unanswered. It is true that no records were found of orders for the mass executions such as those which were carried out at Dachau. It was all done from the top by verbal command, by telephone calls, with none of the otherwise indispensable forms in triplicate. "Thousands Unknown," gone up in smoke, leaving only a pitful of ashes in a deep square grave.

We drove out of the camp in silence. What is to be said now? Eleven years is a long time. The German children at the costume ball up in the castle on the hill and the American "dependents" playing on the lawns of this camp will never know what it felt like to have been alive during the war and aware that people were being gassed and cremated at Dachau—and not knowing how it would end. They will know how it all came out.

If we try to learn from what happened here, for our own vision of what government must be, we are of two minds—needing to be both humane and politic. The writing on the wall expresses them both together. On the one hand, "Father, Forgive Them." And, on the other, "Never."

If you visit here you cannot escape the tears in your eyes, the coldness that wavers through your body, the gagging—like a fist tightening within your throat. But the mind discovers, partly, that it cannot easily comprehend the inhumanity which Dachau represents. And, partly, the spirit is relieved to discover that even the deepest hatred and fear do not survive intact after eleven years.

DUSK, NOVEMBER 1956

Grey dogs howl for the rebel dead
In the darkening hills beyond the towns.
Their echoes gather in my head
As colors in the sky fall down
And windows blacken that reflected red.

Down the hooded streets I pray
To get where thoughts have wished to go;
And feelings, fearings, block the way
Like flocks of sheep on dusk-lit roads.
Guns are booming while we pray.

But see, tall in the glowing west,
A smokestack dreams of Athens' blue;
The eyes of alleycats reflect
Lost sacred sands their Egypts knew,
And those lands spreading in my breast.

In shadow now the lanes grow still
As rooms when someone speaks the truth,
As when the crowds had left Christ's hill,
Hill rising now like the moon from the south;
And all the volcanoes threatening to spill.

And Dante and tall Virgil glide,
Gesturing scorn across the breeze;
The body of the day would stride,
O toward them now, but falls on its knees;
Somewhere the afternoon had lied.

On dark frontiers new troops invade,
Invade while our terror holds its breath
Wondering how can the play be played
While the stars all point to death,
To powder-kegs, and prayers not prayed.

O think the moon in its brightness shows
That the eye of Heaven, loving, looks
As turning into the dusk we go
Away from the vaudeville; the books
Pressing no plucked petal, close.

At breakfast-time there is a pond
Where blossoms float; we have reached;
Before our hands do they now drown?
O Lord, Lord, look from that cloud's breach;
Say those were Your howling hounds.

CLAIRE MCALLISTER.

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TO EACH HIS OWN

"EVERY LITTLE Englishman," someone said, "is born a Whig or a Tory." And it may be that every little American is born a liberal or a conservative. That would not be bad at all if a fair balance were struck, for the nation needs both values. The liberal tends to put his emphasis on freedom and change; the conservative places his on security and stability. Society needs freedom and change, but it also needs security and stability. It needs conservatives and liberals both.

The trouble is that most of us are not willing to play the modest role nature has assigned to us. We are not content merely to throw our weight with a chosen side in the tug of war. We want to be all things to all men, the perfect embodiment of personal balance. We deceive ourselves into believing that with people like us in full charge there would be no need for the tug of war. T'ain't so, t'ain't so.

This is not to deny at all that some people are more balanced than others. But the perfectly balanced man is the perfect man, and there is no such animal around these parts.

From time to time the over-all balance between the two types is upset. One side or the other gets the dominant hold on society. But as long as American society remains free the vanquished will get up, dust off their status quo and resume the tug of war.

What is bad today is that these two human traits have gotten mixed up with ideology, in the popular mind if not in reality. Each is tempted to idolize its own tendencies and to equate either liberalism or conservatism with moral absolutes; each tends to think of the other as a diabolic influence. The "enemy" can be explained only in terms of either stupidity or villainy.

Take the current controversies over censorship. To one group it looks like a simple contest between decency and moral indifferentism; the others see it as a battle between freedom and incipient tyranny. The proponents of "decency" may feel virtuous when they regard the other side as mucky, but that does not make their feelings justified. The proponents of "freedom" may attain their own notion of nobility when they strike out against the censorious but are perhaps equally as removed from reality. Both sides, as a matter of fact, are talking about real values.

Yet the self-righteous note is rarely missing in these recurrent controversies. Anyone who has marked the separate pieties of, say, the New York *Post* and certain Catholic diocesan papers knows what I mean. The *Post*—which, to its credit, is usually fairer to the Catholics' position than these diocesan papers are to its—sometimes seems to invoke the sanctities of liberalism as if they were the prayers of exorcism. On the other hand, who could match the bitterness and sheer insult of some Catholic editors taking out after the *Post,* or more likely, The Commonweal? This kind of thing is understandable only when you realize that the writer sees himself standing on a pillar of righteousness. He envisions himself as expressing not just a personal point of view, or manifesting only his own inclinations, but as defending the very Absolutes themselves. With this view, why should he hesitate to make the little whip-words that will drive the money-changers out of the temple?

Here, then, is the problem of the lay Catholic journalist, especially the journalist of liberal tendencies. Being a Catholic, he will not absolutize the political values he believes in. He could not, for instance, endorse the opinion of Mrs. Robert M. Ferguson, president of Planned Parenthood, who is quoted this way in a recent New York *Post*: "Within the framework of democratic thought, it is pertinent to ask who is the interpreter of God's law. It seems reasonable and right to us that there is more than one dogmatic interpretation of God's law and that each human being is entitled to freedom in his belief." If Mrs. Ferguson's statement adds up to anything, it means she believes American democracy has a position on who is to interpret the law of God and according to that American position one interpretation is as good as another. The Catholic—who heartily endorses the Supreme Court's dictum that the State is not competent in such matters—will not, of course, go along with her.

But, on the other hand, when Mrs. Ferguson's Planned Parenthood is opposed by undemocratic methods, or when civil liberties are interfered with, or her motives are rashly impugned, they must be defended. They must be defended not because Mrs. Ferguson's views are defensible or because birth control is an indifferent matter but because the temporal order—which is the specific province of the layman—has its own values and these values must be defended. Due process, civil liberty, the ground rules of democracy—the faith, hope and charity of the temporal order—make their claims on the citizen and in the free society on the journalist more than on most men. They, rather than the philosophy of individual citizens, call for defense.

This kind of defense might be interpreted as an endorsement of contraception or of religious indifferentism. When that happens the lay editor finds himself making distinctions that really should not be necessary. No wonder he sometimes envies those on both sides who see things in black and white. Gray is a lonely color.

JOHN COGLEY.

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THE SCREEN

COME TO THE FABLE

WITH PLENTY of sentiment and adventure, "Heaven Knows, Mr. Allison" tells the story of a nun and a U.S. Marine marooned on a war-torn island in the South Pacific in 1944. Buddy Adler and Eugene Frenke gave their picture a handsome production with two outstanding stars, a top-notch director and some lovely photography, in De Luxe Color and CinemaScope, taken on the island of Tobago in the British West Indies. The script, written by John Huston and John Lee Mahin from the novel by Charles Shaw, unfortunately finds it necessary to use clichés to prove that nuns, beneath their austere habits, are pretty human after all. This nun has a delightful sense of humor, can dance a jig and is even quite handy at rowing a rubber raft. Since she has had a good education and the Marine (left in infancy at a Milwaukee orphanage from which he fled as a boy) has had practically none, she is faster at picking up his patois than he is at figuring out her more elegant words. This leads to a somewhat tiresome dialogue in the first half of the picture, during which each of the characters explains terms to the other.

Once "Heaven Knows, Mr. Allison" gets over these standard jokes, it settles down to becoming an interesting movie. Director Huston develops his characters well and then places them in continuous danger —from the ravages of nature on a deserted island, from the enemy Japanese and perhaps from each other. Deborah Kerr, using make-up very sparingly but lavishly applying an Irish brogue, makes Sister Angela a woman of strong faith and unaffected charm. Robert Mitchum makes Corporal Allison a hardened fighter who is more overwhelmed by his gentle companion than he is by the Japanese when they invade the island. Mr. Allison's faith is in the Marines (and they don't let him down) but he is a good man and learns to respect Sister Angela's faith. And as Allison becomes more and more solicitous for Sister Angela and they become attracted to each other, her respect for him increases.

In the film's most touching scene, Sister Angela explains about nuns and that she has not yet taken her final vows, which immediately leads Allison to declare his love and propose marriage. Humbly but without complete understanding, he accepts her reply that her heart is already given as the Bride of Christ. Later, however, tipsy with Sake, he pursues the subject again, and the nun runs out into the rain—running away not so much from him as from herself. All this adds to the suspense of "Heaven Knows"—suspense that Huston also builds up during the adventurous episodes: the capturing of a sea turtle, encounters with the enemy, bombings and one scary sequence in which Allison, raiding the Japanese storehouse, has to hide from the guards while a rodent crawls over him.

No doubt in "Heaven Knows" Director Huston tries to recapture the suspense he sustained so well in "The African Queen"—another movie mainly about two oddly paired characters and the adventures they encounter as they fall in love. But the viewer realizes as he watches Huston's new film that the romantic suspense is limited, that no movie of any stature would be so brash as to offend in a fable about a nun and a Marine. "Heaven Knows" never offends. It allows its nun and Marine to have understanding, respect and even love for each other. And the fine last half of the film works up to a moving finale.

ALTHOUGH "Fear Strikes Out" seems to take forever to come to its obvious conclusions—that you can't live someone else's life; you can't even live someone else's dreams—it is so well-made as a movie that it's absorbing from beginning to end. Producer Alan Pakula and Director Robert Mulligan, both making their motion picture debuts, have done a brilliant job in telling the story of Jim Piersall, the Boston Red Sox outfielder who had a complete mental breakdown and then won his way back to health and baseball. Based as it is on the Piersall autobiography (written with Al Hirshberg), this is not a pretty picture, but it is a movie with a warm understanding for human beings, and, because of the first-rate performances by Karl Malden and Anthony Perkins, it packs a tremendous emotional wallop.

Right from the beginning, the elder Piersall (Karl Malden) pushes his young son (Peter Votrian) into baseball and is determined that the boy will one day make the big league. As time passes the serious youngster practices a great deal with his father—because his mother is usually ill and because the practice sessions please his father's vanity. As a young man, played with dead earnestness by Perkins, Jim has his career cut out for him. Complying with his father's wishes, Jim even feels guilty that he isn't a better ball player. From high school to the minors to the Red Sox, the story continues with Jim ever striving to win father's approval. Then comes the breakdown.

The scene in which Jim, like Trilby at the bat, knocks a home run and then goes berserk is terrifying to watch, and so are some of the episodes that follow at the sanitarium with Jim in a complete mental blackout, then having shock treatment, then slowly returning to the world of reality. Perkins, who gives a stunning performance throughout the film, is at his best as the bewildered, frightened young man going through the sessions of psychotherapy—sessions which rise to

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a climax when Jim, always proud of his father, finally realizes the truth of the situation: "If my father hadn't been behind me pushing, I wouldn't be where I am today." The boy finally grows up when he can say to his father: "You don't give a damn about me. You just want me to win."

Perhaps "Fear Strikes Out" is longer than it need be to tell this pat story of a father-son relationship and perhaps the details are over-simplified. But the good cast (which also includes Adam Williams as the psychiatrist, Norma Moore as Jim's patient wife, Perry Wilson as Jim's mysteriously ailing mother) are worth watching at all times. The film's black-and-white photography is extremely effective. But what is most remarkable about the movie is that it never makes a villain out of this unwise father who was so ambitious for his son. Karl Malden's portrayal of the determined man and Anthony Perkins' sensitive portrait of an excessively dutiful son are practically letter-perfect.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

THE STAGE

FOUR VERSIONS OF COMEDY

IN *The Dark Voyage and the Golden Mean,* his brilliant demonstration of the philosophic essence of comedy, Mr. Albert Cook charts the course of human experience within a polar scheme of the *probable* and the *wonderful,* dualities of mean and extreme which impose, in art, their characteristic forms. The world of the probable is a social world, with reason its beacon and manners its preoccupation: comedy issues from that world. Tragedy flowers in the search for the wonderful: voyages into a world of dark histories of the individual soul, of aristocratic failures—"outsiders"—brought to waste and death in a flux of the absolute. Comedy is bourgeois, and ratifies social norms by expelling the rebel; its subjects are the probable, politics and sex. Tragedy's obsessions are the wonderful, sin and death. The antinomies are fruitful, and Mr. Cook explores them with eclectic and deepening authority: he has meditated richly on Yeats' image of tragedy as the drowning and breaking of the dykes that separate man from man, and comedy as the house which is built upon those dykes.

It is instructive to observe how, even in the shoals and shallows of negligible commercial comedy, these patterns persist: four illustrations readily to hand demonstrate Mr. Cook's thesis with almost a mathematical regularity. All four are studies of contemporary manners which posit, with various degrees of irony, the authority of convention, compromise and the social norm. All four are preoccupied with the unit of the family and its tribal values; they chasten rebellion and iconoclasm with ridicule, rue or reason, and bring its excess into proportion. One attempts a richer attitude, and fails to enforce it, though the ambition is gallant and full of interest.

In the world of the probable, I am tempted to say that nothing is more probable than Mr. Ronald Alexander's "Holiday for Lovers" (*at the Longacre*); nothing more probable, too, than to see it a year hence stretched into CinemaScope, and luscious with the plundered photography of the Grand Tour. The wonderful brushes Mr. Alexander's innocents abroad but lightly, and never bruises them; turbulence is always a misunderstanding, and they go back to Minneapolis having the honey of their invincible amiability, and eating it too. The moral mottoes are prettily tatted, the piece is adroit and not without the charm of the wholly predictable; it is played too with a consistent vitality of good spirits.

IN SEARCH of the amorous wonderful, Mr. Peter De Vries' heroes prowl, with Quixotic clumsiness, through an exurbia of Bermuda shorts and back issues of the *New Yorker.* Their triumphs are furtive and ignominious: the De Vries male may make his anxious pass at adultery, but his disenchanted wife will always be watching through the picture window. Indeed, Mr. De Vries is truly the only authentic wit in this present company, not only in virtue of his lapidary, non-probable fancy, but because of the gamy, sad little pellet of wisdom which lies, like an onion, at the bottom of his exhilarating martini. Here, unfortunately, this perception and zest are merely the occasion for lubricity, and under the driving tutelage of its co-author, Mr. Joseph Fields, "The Tunnel of Love" (*at the Royale*) has not burrowed deeply into its wriggling salacities of Priapus and pregnancy before it hits rock bottom.

MR. GORE VIDAL plucks the wonderful out of some fantasy of space and time and brings it thudding to earth in a flying saucer. The gentleman who embarks on "A Visit to a Small Planet" (*at the Booth*) has miscalculated his temporal continuum slightly, since he arrives prepared to intervene in the Battle of Bull Run. Otherwise, however, he is a splendid symbol of wonder to impose on the probable pentagon-smugness of Washington: sentiment, sexuality and convention have evaporated from him; he proposes a morality of uncommitted hedonism ("Isn't Hydrogen *fun!*" he announces with languid glee); he talks with cats (legendary agents of the wonderful, as opposed to the wholly probable dog), and altogether he is pure reason and will and anarchy and utterly intolerable.

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True to the comic insistence, he is expelled, and a rational lunacy—exemplified in the army officer whose legitimate province is an all too probable laundry—resumes its sway.

Mr. Vidal has a natty pen and a cool effrontery of wit; nonetheless a marked, controlling sensibility is absent from "Visit to a Small Planet," and the play never quite sustains its initial momentum. The note of fatigued humanism on which it subsides—beauty of imperfection, etc.—is glib and perfunctory. Still, this is the comedy of an independent talent and must be honored. It has been staged by Mr. Cyril Ritchard as another of the Restoration farces into which he translates all raw material of art. Mr. Ritchard's supremacy in this vein is a very considerable aesthetic achievement: it is, of course, only one style of many, and it may stress the epicene element too sharply, but its pungency of delight is indisputable. The image of himself which the actor presents is irresistibly diverting: his mockery simultaneously of passion and the absence of passion is one of the few authentic ideas of personality our theater may offer. Mr. Ritchard's effervescent dandyism is played off against the low factuality of Mr. Eddie Mayehoff's ripe caricature of army brass. Mr. Mayehoff gives a performance rather like Miss Ruth Gordon's in "The Matchmaker," which guys not so much a particular man as man himself—the postures which outrage his momentary superiority to the animals; the hoots, whines, growls and grimaces which call it into question. Messrs. Mayehoff and Ritchard might be playing one of those Renaissance masques of impersonal Humours, so joyously do they indulge their abstract madness.

MR. ARNOLD SCHULMAN'S "A Hole in the Head" (*at the Plymouth*) is the most ambitious of these comedies; it is also the most tender, often the funniest, and always the most erratic. It is hard to track down the secret failure: I would hazard it to lie in a certain limitation of scope, the absence of some investiture of worth, which makes Mr. Schulman's dramatic experience seem fundamentally not large. The wobble in the play's form—its fluctuations between pathos and brutal farce—would be permissible did it not seem to reflect some nervous shifting about in the author's focus. Yet "A Hole in the Head" is full of brilliant observation of an unexplored social fact—the Jewish community of Miami—which Mr. Schulman records with gusto and spiritual zest; what a relief this is after the mealy-mouthed temporizing of writers like Mr. Paddy Chayefsky. Mr. Schulman has wisely learned that the way to the universal lies through the particular. There are moments when he seems to wander into the preserve of the East Bronx *verismo* school, and he should recognize that the motif of the desperate

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unmarried girl (nere widow) is not only dramatically inoperative but emotionally exhausted. There is a kind of unconscious exploitation of the susceptibility of human feeling in this theme which has become distasteful.

Mr. Schulman is writing about an amiable duffer whose search for the wonderful has dwindled into a mechanical repetition of adventures, sexual and commercial; the horizons of the probable, in the persons of a son to educate and a nest of steaming, righteous relatives, are contracting on him. The theme is classic, but a denser sensibility would have dilated it with the tragic tides of experience (Chekhov in "The Cherry Orchard"), or kept it poised in the center of a large, humane irony (Chaucer). It would have become, in either event, *absolute*. Mr. Schulman subsides into a shifting acquiescence, which is the way of life, not art. Yet even to invoke such names, however remotely, is a tribute, and I will not withdraw it.

Mr. Garson Kanin's brassy direction may deflect the play, I cannot tell: in the main, it seemed to me fast and incisive. Mr. Paul Douglas plays the improvident drifter with his hulking amiability and a nice vagueness which reflects the role's ambiguity. His four-eyed son, an excellent piece of observation, is realized with owlish prescience by Mr. Tommy White. It is customary, in comedies of this genre, for subsidiary characters, often bizarre, to dominate the scene. Mr. David Burns and Miss Kay Medford decidedly do that —he with apoplectic frenzies of familial indignation; she with a cloying, nasal, lovable horror which confirms her position as one of the finest comic artists in our theater.

RICHARD HAYES.

BOOKS

Vivid Account of America's Early Leaders

THE MEN WHO MADE THE NATION. By John Dos Passos. Doubleday. $5.95.

By JOHN COURNOS

HERE is a book that is an education in itself. It is scholarly without being pedantic, readable without having been subjected to the process popularly known as "dramatization." John Dos Passos is a writer who combines successfully the craft of a historian with natural reportorial gifts. The effect in a book of this kind is irresistible. The reality of yesterday returns to us with the vividness of today.

What Dos Passos reveals without sentimentality and with commendable clarity is that the men who made our nation between 1782 and 1802 had a tremendous job on their hands. and what they did they did in the face of almost insurmountable difficulties, even in the face of violent differences and conflicts among themselves.

The men described here were, first and foremost, human beings, strong and passionate certainly, heroic at times, but also endowed with human frailties. The crises in which the great political leaders participated were never-ending, matching in intensity the crises borne by leaders today, but greatly intensified by vengeful rancor and unrestrained personal abuse, of which we have but faint echoes today. Hence it is scarcely surprising that Mr. Dos Passos' fascinating historical saga of twenty years of strife, internal and external, should culminate in the final pages on a note of violence—the quite unnecessary duel in which Alexander Hamilton was slain by Aaron Burr.

It was a dynamic age. The Constitution was born in a conflict of rival passions and interests. The North, the South and the rapidly developing West all wanted different things. Expediency played its part in reconciling them. "Hopelessly ahead of his time," Thomas Jefferson tried, as he had tried earlier in the Declaration of Independence, to achieve the eventual abolition of slavery, but was forced to yield to the men of the South who had self-aggrandizing ambitions and no vision, and chose to sacrifice the to them unpredictable future in favor of the immediate interests. There would have been no Constitution and no Union if the regional demands had found no response in the Constitution makers.

So great were the differences between the States, and particularly between those of the North and the South, that repeatedly the balloting ended in deadlock. On one occasion the aged Benjamin Franklin rose to make a motion that the contenders have recourse to prayer. Alexander Hamilton boiled down the problem to the formula: "Give all power to the many, they will oppress the few. Give all power to the few, they will oppress the many." It was up to the Convention to set up a republic which would check both types of repression. The final document distressed the democratic Jefferson, and it did not over-please John Adams.

The real dangers, however, for the new republic were all ahead. It weathered the conflicts of the Convention only to face an ominous world situation. The vast panorama of portentous events now extended to France in the grip of Revolution, and to England, which before long was at war with France. Both nations engaged in depredations on our commerce, and it was a perilous time for the new government.

This is not the place to go into the Republican-Federalist controversy which dominates so much of this immense tome. Had Dos Passos written this as a novel instead of as a history, it would not have been surprising if Jefferson and Hamilton appeared in it as the hero and villain respectively. Indeed, they ap-

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pear so here. As it happened, even John Adams, a professed Federalist, was to come to regard Hamilton as "the most restless, impatient, artful, indefatigable and unprincipled intriguer in the United States if not in the world." And Jefferson stands out as the man who ardently worked for the Bill of Rights and all that it represented in terms of human dignity and justice for the lowliest.

Christian Appraisal

THE CALL OF THE MINARET, By Kenneth Cragg. Oxford. $6.25.

By JAMES KRITZECK

IF THERE is one image of the Islamic world capable of evoking at the same time the surface response of the untutored Westerner and the most cherished recollections of the travelled orientalist, that image is certainly the muezzin's call to prayer, heard five times each day by more than four hundred million Muslims. Kenneth Cragg, Professor of Arabic at the Hartford Seminary Foundation and co-editor of the *Muslim World,* has taken this call from the minaret both as a point of departure and as a principle of organization for an excellent new study of a little-understood world.

Yet it was for more than a school-text summary of Islamic religion that the muezzin's call was chosen. "We do not merely aim at a résumé of Muslim belief and practice," the author writes. "We take it in its own most intimate and inward imperative because we seek to know it, as far as may be, from within. We wish to hear at the minaret what it is which greets every rising sun and salutes every declining day for millions of contemporary men, and thus to enter with them across the threshold of the mosque into their world of meaning. For it is a world which deserves to be penetrated with understanding." No one who has been obliged to wade through numberless turgid works on Islam, old and new, can fail to be grateful to Professor

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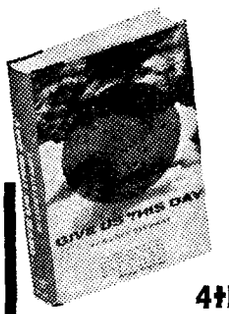
Cragg for a treatment both learned and well-written of the many problems inherent in his subject. To readers blessedly unacquainted with such other works, *The Call of the Minaret* can be recommended without reservation as an original and informative work.

But the muezzin's call, Professor Cragg observes, is not addressed merely to the Muslims. It demands a response from Christians as well. No less than half the book, and what seems to be the more deeply-felt half, is devoted to an exposition of what, in detail, the author feels this response should be. "The muezzin from his minaret calls his hearers to come to grips with life . . . He invites men to a relationship with God and to an attitude toward his fellows. He stands ideologically upon revelation. His concern is for a world of men in which the reign of God obtains. He acknowledges himself the trustee of what is greater than himself. In all these respects the elements of Christianity also are not only and altogether contrasts. Contrasts there are, sharp and ineluctable . . . But there are terms about the same things and confrontations with the same reality. To go into this world of the mosque in the name of one's duty by Christ is not to be an enemy: no misconception, Muslim or Christian, should be allowed to make it seem so . . . To embrace and then fulfill the wide dimensions of these disturbing but tremendous relationships is the Christian answer to the summons of the muezzin."

There is no break in either the style or the erudition of the second half. Even the most casual reader will be perplexed, however, at the studied vagueness with which terms like "the Christian Church" are employed. There is the usual deprecation of the Crusades, the usual bow to Ramon Lull; but there is next to nothing about the historic Christian - Muslim confrontations (even of John Damascene) or about the developments in Christendom which have brought about this dire modern need for a new Christian appraisal of Islam. In fact, it is only Christian missionary Arabists "from Henry Martyn to Samuel Zwemer" that we are bidden to regard, and only converts from Islam to Protestantism from whom we are bidden to derive hope. A consideration of some works between the last of the Greek Fathers and the Reformation (and, for that matter, of sparse but hardly despicable Catholics since) might have led the author to conclude that this new Christian attitude is not, in reality, so new. But it is precisely because Professor Cragg's basic attitudes toward Islam are so perfectly intelligent and so perfectly right that one must lament the incompleteness of his Christian picture.

Perhaps, therefore, *The Call of the Minaret* has an even more devious and unsettling message than its author intended. Perhaps, by its very omissions, it tells us why Christianity is obliged to face up to putting its own household of faith in order at the same time that it would dare to confront a religion with the still genuine, still strong spiritual force of Islam.



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retired, some not so retiring. Their arena for action is primarily an area of thirty or forty gardens which belong to two rows of terrace-houses backing onto each other. Compulsiveness not satisfied without an observer, Mr. Sansom has one suitably hidden at a window, ready to record anything that happens below in kingdoms animal, mineral, or vegetable, so to speak.

Hell doesn't pop at first. A middle class cat like Monsieur Dupont continues his business as ditto house dwellers like Miss Tigerpants and Mrs. Peabasin go about theirs. On occasion a distant pneumatic drill tap-tap-taps and in season various flowers vie for attention with other appurtenances of gardens. Existence is languorous, just about what the doctor might prescribe for a bachelor with an ulcer and an eczema, a temperament and a monograph to write, as is the case with Matthew Ligne, the bachelor in question.

But Lily, menace to man in dormant stage, has moved in with her hetaerish sister, and the alarum bell begins to clang. How Matthew the idealistic observer becomes an unwilling-willing participator; how man fares in his yearning for perfection; how reality inevitably gives the *coup de grâce* to illusion (author assisting)—all this is the burden of *The Loving Eye*.

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REVIEWERS

John Cournos is a well-known critic who has a special interest in early American history and literature.

James Kritzeck is a member of the faculty of Princeton University.

Max Cosman is a frequent contributor to critical and scholarly journals. This is his first appearance in The Commonweal.

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Then and Now

The problem of meeting the costs of higher education is hardly a new one here in the United States.

Students in attendance at privately conducted colleges and universities actually pay a little less than half of what it costs to educate them; the balance is supplied by the income from endowments and by available gifts. Consequently the institutions must conduct a never-ceasing campaign for funds to meet current expenses. This campaign injures scholastic enterprise in three ways: it makes wealthy donors, normally unfamiliar with the business of education, assume an importance to which they are not genuinely entitled; it creates an atmosphere of advertising which attracts to the campus hordes of the same kind of unfit as swarm to parades in honor of celebrities; and it seldom leaves the school time to grow inwardly at anything like the same pace at which it develops outwardly . . .

The current practice of seeking gifts above all else makes the institution more subservient to givers than ought to be the case. In general, the opinions of wealthy and successful men are not harmful to the college. These involve practical experience, much rugged common sense, and a certain indispensable element of conservatism . . .

Often enough an industrial magnate or a banker serves the community in ways that deserve recognition. But when one confronts the news of college commencements in which the first place is occupied by doctorates conferred honoris causa upon a series of aldermen and sausage manufacturers, one can guess fairly accurately that the explanation is not really service but "contributions." How can any school expect its students to interest themselves in scholarship, scientific research or the genuinely academic professions when the men it applauds, year in and year out, have no other title to greatness than the fact that their signature on "the dotted line" is authentic and dependable?

—The Commonweal, June 29, 1927

The small group of learned colleagues that once made up the university is no more. Modern enrollments, expenses and objectives have made bureaucracy the characteristic organization of modern universities, administered by professional executives acting in accordance with the desires of political, industrial, alumni and student bodies. It is rare that administrators or the sources of administrative power limit academic freedom by some dramatic dismissal of a professor. Often, less noticed but more effective limitations are accomplished through the altering of employment practices, standards, budgets, salaries and curricula—limiting academic freedom by limiting academic responsibility. An administrator may not refuse to incorporate a sequence of teacher training courses if the legislature sees the need for it, disproportionately develop carbon electives within the chemistry department if a local industry promises a grant, or build a huge athletic organization if the alumni desire it.

It is by these and similar measures, some highly necessary, some highly commendable, that academic responsibility is lessened. Meanwhile, the small group of colleagues has become a large number of employees. The new academic world is their world and they have adjusted to it, for it is their livelihood. They may rise up at a dramatic abridgement of academic freedom, but they are participants in the loss of academic responsibility. Increasingly, theirs is the life of the salaried employee more than that of the curious, disciplined scholar.

But with all of this, the search for fundamental knowledge is continued by some members of the faculty. In the physical and biological sciences, this search has been accepted as necessary for the obvious utilitarian results that have emanated from it. Perhaps even the quest for and communication of physical and biological truth is viewed as good in itself.

—Lawrence Podell in The Commonweal, January 25, 1957

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